

February 23, 2022

**Testimony Regarding HB 5037 - Dental Reimbursement Rates**

[Samantha Banaszek Southington, CT]

Senators Kushner, Cicarella, Osten, Hartley, and Miner, Representatives Abercrombie, Betts, Walker, Dathan, Nolan, and France, and distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee,

My name is Samantha Banaszek, and I am a registered voter in Southington, CT.

I am testifying in my role as a Dental Hygiene student and future Registered Dental Hygienist. As a clinician I see the importance of those in need of dental coverage and strongly believe that if there were increased reimbursement rates we would have a better total health.

The proposed increased reimbursement rates for adults seeking dental treatment on HUSKY are greatly appreciated, especially the proposed endodontic rate matching the children's rate. However, we are concerned the 25% increase is too small to increase provider participation. **In order to increase provider participation in Medicaid, adult dental reimbursement rates need to be increased to parity with the child rates.**

In my experience working in the healthcare field, I have been asked so many times after care that is needed has been discussed what is the cost. So many deny treatment because they simply cannot afford the out-of-pocket expense. Many already know their insurance will not cover so they do not even bother making an appointment, and most do not know where to go that will even accept their insurance. Fees in our world have gone up drastically and to think these rates have remained the same just does not make sense. It is not realistic nor is it cost effective to those who need it most.

I urge you to increase the adult Medicaid reimbursement rates to bring them to parity with the child Medicaid rates. This will allow family dental practices to accept Medicaid patients of all ages, expanding the network and improving access to care.

We look forward to continuing this conversation about how we can best provide comprehensive dental care to Connecticut's low-income residents. Thank you for your time and for supporting access to care in Connecticut.

Samantha Banaszek

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